CLAIM(S)

What is claimed is:

1. A combination appliance apparatus, comprising:

an enclosed chamber including top, bottom, and vertical side walls, wherein one of top, bottom, and vertical side walls having an airflow inlet opening;

gate means adapted for removably blocking the airflow inlet opening;

a heating unit positioned in the enclosed chamber;

a refrigeration unit positioned outside of the enclosed chamber and having a cool air duct coupled to the airflow inlet opening; and

a controller in communication with the gate means, the heating unit, and the refrigeration unit for selectively activating the combination appliance apparatus; wherein

when a cooling mode is selected, the controller actuates the gate means to unblock the airflow inlet opening and activates the refrigeration unit to deliver cool air through the cool air duct to the enclosed chamber; and

when a heating mode is selected, the controller actuates the gate means to block the airflow inlet opening and activates the heating unit.

2. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 1, further comprising surface burners mounted on top of the enclosed chamber.

3. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 1, wherein:

the enclosed chamber has an airflow outlet opening;

the refrigeration unit has a return air duct coupled to the airflow outlet opening; and

the apparatus further comprises second gate means adapted for removably blocking the airflow outlet opening, the controller being in communication with the second gate means to actuate the second gate means to unblock the airflow outlet opening when the cooling mode is selected and to block the airflow outlet opening when the heating mode is

selected.

4. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 1, wherein the heating unit includes one of an electrical resistance heating element and a gas burner mounted on an interior surface of the enclosed chamber.

5. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 1, wherein:

the enclosed chamber has a heat exchange vent; and

the apparatus further comprising second gate means adapted for removably blocking the heat exchange vent, the controller being in communication with the second gate means to actuate the second gate means to block the heat exchange vent when the cooling mode is selected and to unblock the heat exchange vent when the heating mode is selected.

6. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus includes a drawer slidably mounted below the enclosed chamber for housing the refrigeration unit.

7. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 1, wherein the drawer includes a partition separating the refrigeration unit from a storage section in the drawer.

8. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 1, the refrigeration unit further comprising:

a compressor having a first inlet and a first outlet;

a condenser having a second inlet and a second outlet, the second inlet in fluid communication with the first outlet;

an evaporator having a third inlet and a third outlet, the third inlet in fluid communication with the second outlet, and the third outlet in fluid communication with the first inlet; and

an evaporator fan interposed between a cool air outlet of the evaporator and the cool air duct for drawing cool air away from the evaporator and into the cool air duct to cool the enclosed chamber.

9. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 8, wherein:

the compressor, evaporator, and evaporator fan are mounted below the bottom wall of the enclosed chamber; and

the condenser is mounted on an outer surface of one of the vertical side walls.

10. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 8, further comprising a drawer slidably mounted below the enclosed chamber, wherein the compressor, evaporator, and evaporator fan are located in the drawer.

11. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a selector in communication with the controller for pre-selecting the cooling and heating modes and for pre-selecting times and temperatures in which the refrigeration unit and the heating unit are to operate in each of the cooling and heating modes.

12. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a communication router in selective communication with the controller, the communication router being configured to enable an individual at a remote location to pre-select the cooling and heating-modes and to pre-select times and temperatures in which the refrigeration unit and the heating unit are to operate in each of the cooling and heating modes.

13. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 12, the communication router further comprising:

a communication input configured for connection to an external link for receiving a message from the remote location;

a processor in communication with the communication input, the processor identifying the message as one of a telephone call and a combination appliance control request;

a switch controllable by the processor, the switch having a switch input coupled to the communication input, a first switch output in communication with a telephone answering machine, and a second switch output in communication with the controller; wherein

when the processor identifies the message as the telephone call, the processor enables the switch to route the message from the communication input to the first switch output; and

when the processor identifies the message as the combination appliance control request, the processor enables the switch to route the message from the communication input to the second switch output.

14. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 13, further comprising a data receiver in communication with each of the second switch output and the controller, the data receiver enabling communication between the second switch output and the controller in response to a received authorized access code.

15. A combination appliance apparatus comprising:

an enclosed chamber including top, bottom, and vertical side walls, the bottom wall having an airflow inlet opening;

surface burners mounted on top of the enclosed chamber;

gate means adapted for removably blocking the airflow inlet opening;

a heating unit positioned in the enclosed chamber, the heating unit including one of an electrical resistance heating element and a gas burner mounted on an interior surface of the enclosed chamber;

a refrigeration unit positioned outside of the enclosed chamber, the

refrigeration unit including:

a cool air duct coupled to the airflow inlet opening of the enclosed chamber;

a compressor having a first inlet and a first outlet;

a condenser having a second inlet and a second outlet, the second inlet in fluid communication with the first outlet;

an evaporator having a third inlet and a third outlet, the third inlet in fluid communication with the second outlet, and the third outlet in fluid communication with the first inlet; and

an evaporator fan interposed between a cool air outlet of the evaporator and the cool air duct for drawing cool air away from the evaporator and into the cool air duct to cool the enclosed chamber; and

a controller in communication with the gate means, the heating unit, and the refrigeration unit for selectively activating the combination appliance apparatus; wherein

when a cooling mode is selected, the controller actuates the gate means to unblock the airflow inlet opening and activates the refrigeration unit to deliver cool air through the cool air duct to the enclosed chamber; and

when a heating mode is selected, the controller actuates the gate means to block the airflow inlet opening and activates the heating unit.

16. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 15, wherein:

the compressor, evaporator, and evaporator fan are mounted below the bottom wall of the enclosed chamber; and

the condenser is mounted on an outer surface of one of the vertical side walls.

17. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 15, wherein:

the enclosed chamber has a heat exchange vent; and

the apparatus further comprises second gate means adapted for removably blocking the heat exchange vent, the controller being in communication with the second gate means to actuate the second gate means to block the heat exchange vent when the cooling mode is selected and to unblock the heat exchange vent when the heating mode is selected.

18. The combination appliance apparatus of claim 15, further comprising a selector in communication with the controller for pre-selecting the cooling and heating modes and for pre-selecting times and temperatures in which the refrigeration unit and the heating unit are to operate in each of the cooling and heating modes.

19. An adapter kit for converting an oven to a combination appliance apparatus, the oven including an enclosed chamber having top, bottom, and vertical side walls, and the oven including a heating unit positioned in the enclosed chamber, the adapter kit comprising:

a gate assembly configured for mounting below the bottom wall of the enclosed chamber to removably block an airflow inlet opening into the enclosed chamber;

a refrigeration unit including:

a compressor having a first inlet and a first outlet;

a condenser having a second inlet and a second outlet, the second inlet configured for placement in fluid communication with the first outlet;

an evaporator having a third inlet and a third outlet, the third inlet configured for placement in fluid communication with the second outlet, and the third outlet configured for placement in fluid communication with the first inlet; and

an evaporator fan configured for connection to a cool air outlet of the evaporator and configured to draw cool air away from the evaporator; and

a control unit installable into the oven, the control unit including:

a controller configured to control each of the gate assembly, the heating unit, and the refrigeration unit; and

a selector in communication with the controller for enabling an

individual to instruct the controller to operate in each of a heating and cooling mode, and to pre-select times and temperatures in which the refrigeration unit and the heating unit are to operate in each of the cooling and heating modes.

20. The adapter kit of claim 19, further comprising a communication router configured for selective communication with the controller of the control unit, the communication router being configured to enable an individual at a remote location to pre-select the cooling and heating modes and to pre-select times and temperatures in which the refrigeration unit and the heating unit are to operate in each of the cooling and heating modes.